

IRTS Radio News Bulletin Sunday February 23rd 2003

Summits On The Air

We are pleased to announce the launch of the Summits on the Air programme, SOTA for short, in the Republic of Ireland. The official launch date is 15th March, which is the Saturday of St Patrick's weekend.

The purpose of SOTA is to encourage amateur radio based activity from the hills and mountains, in the same way as the very successful IOTA programme encourages activity from islands. Already there are active SOTA programmes in Northern Ireland, England, Scotland, Wales, Isle of Man and South Africa, and plans are underway to launch SOTA in a number of other countries.

Three categories of operators may be interested in SOTA - activators (who climb the hills and operate from them), chasers (who work the activators) and short wave listeners. There are awards for all categories. There are 387 summits in Ireland that are eligible for points under the SOTA programme. For the purposes of the programme, the country is divided into four regions, each with its own regional manager. The summits in each region are listed in the association's reference manual, which can be downloaded from the Irish SOTA website www.gsl.net/sotaei/. The reference manual also contains full details of the SOTA programme along with a summary of the features of some of the hills in each region.

The association manager is Joe Ryan EI7GY, who also acts as the regional manager for the Leinster area. The other regional managers are Joe Fadden EI3IX, John Desmond EI7GL and Tom Rea EI2GP.

Details of planned SOTA activities will be announced shortly on the radio news. In the meantime, Joe and his colleagues would like to hear from anyone interested in activating those summits!

Region 5 Dinner

There are still a few tickets left for the Annual Region 5 Dinner at the Silversprings Hotel in Cork City on Friday March 14th next. The five-course meal will only cost 25 euro and bookings should be made with Dave EI4BZ as soon as possible.

Tipperary Radio Club

The next meeting of the Tipperary Amateur Radio Group will be held in the newly renovated Raheen House Hotel Raheen Road Clonmel on Thursday the 6th of March at 8pm.

Cork Radio Club

The Annual General Meeting of Cork Radio Club will be held on Monday night March 10th at Wilton park House, Bishopstown in Cork City. All existing members are asked to attend. New members will be very welcome. The club meets every Monday night in Wilton Park house.

South Eastern Radio Group AGM

The Annual General Meeting of the South Eastern Amateur Radio Group will take place in the Roanmore GAA Centre Cleaboy Road Waterford on Wednesday next, the 26th February, at 8.00 pm sharp. As this is a very important event for the club, all members are requested to attend.

South Dublin Radio Club

On Tuesday last, 18th February, SDR members participated in an Amateur Television experiment, when a temporary ATV transmitter and receiver were installed in the club premises, and signals were exchanged with Dave EI2HR at his QTH is Tallaght, county Dublin. The experiment was a great success, and most club members took the opportunity to appear on camera. Further details of this experiment will be carried in the next issue of Echo Ireland. Meanwhile, a final reminder that the SDR Annual General Meeting takes place on Tuesday next, 25th February at 8.00 pm in the club QTH. This is the most important meeting of the year in the club's calendar and all Limerick and Enniskillen Rallies Limerick Radio Club will hold their Annual Trade Fair at the Greenhills Hotel on the Ennis Road in Limerick on Sunday week next, March the 9th. All the regular traders will be in attendance as well as Yaesu, Icom and Linear Amp from the UK. This will be the major rally in Echo India this year. Contact Paul EI6FE on 061-360122 or e-mail ei6fe@eircom.net. The 22nd Enniskillen Amateur Radio Show, hosted by Lough Erne ARC, will be held in the Killyhevlin Hotel, Enniskillen, Co Fermanagh on Sunday 6th of April 2003. Information from Herbie, GI6JPO on 028-6638-7761 or h.graham@bigfoot.com.

EI Activity Day 2003

All EI stations are asked to make a special effort to get on the air for the annual EI Activity Day which this year is a three-day event, to be held from Saturday March 15th to Monday 17th inclusive. EI stations are still in great demand by stations trying to complete their Worked EI Counties Award and many overseas stations are also collecting Worked All Ireland Squares. Some years ago, clubs were very active in getting the rarer counties on the air. Maybe this effort could be repeated again this year.

Contests in the coming weeks

The ARRL DX SSB Contest takes place over 48 hours next weekend, March 1st and 2nd. Conditions for the CW leg of this contest held last weekend were only fair and scores were a little down on previous years.

Items for inclusion in next week's Radio News should be forwarded to Mark Wall EI7IS. He can be contacted on 087-6302026. News can also be submitted via e-mail to news@irts.ie for automatic forwarding to both the radio and printed news services.

[C]